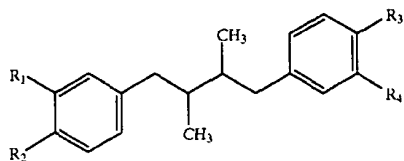


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What is claimed is:

1. A method for suppressing viral growth in a host which consists essentially of administering to the host an effective viral growth suppressing amount of a composition consisting essentially of a compound of the formula:



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wherein R_1 , R_2 , R_3 and R_4 are each selected from the group consisting of HO— , $\text{CH}_2\text{O—}$ and $\text{CH}_2(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{O—}$, provided that R_1 , R_2 , R_3 and R_4 are not each HO— .

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said compound is water-soluble.

3. The method of claim 1 for suppressing Herpes simplex virus in the host.

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